

March 23, 1999

HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS OF PERSIAN GULF WAR AND FUTURE CONFLICTS

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive sets policy implementing Section 102 of Public Law 105-368, which amends the authority (Title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 1710) authorizing health care for veterans of the Persian Gulf War and future conflicts. This law became effective November 11, 1998.

2. POLICY: VHA will implement these changes to Title 38 U.S.C. Section 1710(e):

a. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is allowed to furnish hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care to any veteran for any illness who was exposed to a toxic substance, radiation, or other condition, as provided for in 38 U.S.C. 1710 (e) and who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War, or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities occurring after November 11, 1998. This is the case, notwithstanding that there is insufficient medical evidence to conclude that such condition is attributable to such service. Care for the veteran in this case may not be provided after a period of 2 years beginning on the date of the veteran's discharge or release from active military, naval, or air service.

b. Under 38 U.S.C. 1710(a)(2)(F), hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care can be provided to a veteran whom the Secretary finds may have been exposed to a toxic substance or environmental hazard while serving on active duty in the Southwest Asia Theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War, until December 31, 2001. **NOTE:** *These services cannot be provided after this date.*

3. ACTION: Medical Center Directors will provide authorized services to eligible Persian Gulf War veterans and veterans of future wars and hostilities in accordance with Public Law 105-368, Section 102, which amends 38 U.S.C. Section 1710(e).

4. REFERENCES

- a. Public Law 105-368, Section 102.
- b. Title 38 U.S.C., Section 1710.

5. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: Director, Health Administration Service (10C3), is responsible for this directive. Questions may be referred to 202-273-8301 or 202-273-8398.

6. RESCISSION: This VHA Directive will expire March 23, 2004.

S/ by Thomas Garthwaite, M.D. for
Kenneth W. Kizer, M.D., M.P.H.
Under Secretary for Health

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THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES MARCH 23, 2004